

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 5, 7 and 9-12 as follows:

A2 5. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the processing chamber is defined by a peripheral wall and a pair of opposite end walls, at least one of the end walls comprising a releasable end wall part covering an opening, which is defined in the upper part of the end wall, said opening having dimensions sufficient to allow insertion of guide plates into the chamber through such opening.

A3 7. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the inner peripheral wall of the processing chamber comprises means (37-39) for releasable fastening said guide plates (7-9; 20-21) at any of axially spaced, predetermined positions.

8. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the guide plates (7-9; 20, 21) extend substantially at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the processing chamber (1).

A4 10. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein consecutive guide plates are formed and arranged so as to force gas flowing from the gas supplying means (10) to the gas discharge means (11) to follow a tortuous path and to flow in opposite, transverse directions.

11. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least some of the guide plates define or comprise conduits (33) for a heating or cooling fluid.